



Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

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Celebrating 40 Years of Leadership & Advocacy



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February __, 2016

Honorable Don Knabe
Supervisor, Fourth District
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
822 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisor Knabe:

Your commitment to serving individuals with disabilities has touched the lives of thousands within Los Angeles County and served as an inspiration for those who were unaware of the inequities experienced. For this, we say thank you! As you know, since 2003 the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities has been able to award more than \$80,000 in educational scholarships, which have helped these extraordinary individuals extend their education beyond high school, as well as achieve independence and self-sufficiency.

But we, the members of Commission, feel there is much more work to be done in this area and have set the goal of doubling the number of educational scholarships awarded each year. We currently provide the following scholarships to young adults and veterans:

Bernard Siegel & Bill Tainter Scholarship Program

Ernest T. Hamilton. Jr. Scholarship Program

Ruben Anthony Rios Creative Arts & Design Scholarship Program

At this time, the Commission would like to request funding in the amount of \$5,000 from each of our five distinguished Supervisors for a total contribution of \$25,000, which will be awarded to deserving students within your District. As you know, our constituents come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds and the support of the entire Board of Supervisors will allow these individuals with disabilities the opportunity to pursue their dreams of continued education.

Supervisor Knabe, we thank you in advance for your consideration! Because of your support, this Commission has been able to take many positive steps to educate our community including our Veterans and young adults about resources available that can help them become more active participants in our community. We couldn't have done it without you!

Best wishes,

Carlos Benavides
President

Enclosure

LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Since 2003, the Commission has been able to award more than \$80,000 in educational scholarships. The scholarships have helped these extraordinary individuals extend their education beyond high school, as well as achieve independence and self-sufficiency. Currently we offer multiple scholarships within each of the three categories.

Bernard Siegel & Bill Tainter Scholarship Program

Bernard Siegel was a longtime member of Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities. As a disabled person, he was a passionate and empathetic advocate for people with disabilities. He was also a distinguished professional in the aerospace industry which included the LEM landing craft that successfully landed a man on the moon.

Bill Tainter was the Executive Director for the State of California Department of Rehabilitation Department. As a person with disabilities, he increased representation of people with disabilities in top-level management positions in the Department. He was a nationally recognized leader and role model in the disability community. His work also included developing programs and workshops on disability awareness, as well as presentations on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) legislation.

Students who meet the following criteria are encouraged to participate:

1. Students reside in the County of Los Angeles;
2. Students diagnosed with a learning or physical disability; and
3. Students with a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or better.

Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr. Scholarship Program

Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr. was a former Veteran and Commissioner for the Commission on Disabilities. Although physically paralyzed, his determination to spread disability awareness was most notable as the host of "The Beat Goes On", a cable television program for the City of Compton and as a motivational speaker. The Ernest T. Hamilton, Jr. Memorial Scholarship is extended to veterans with disabilities who are pursuing a higher education.

Veterans pursuing higher education, regardless of age, and meet the following criteria are encouraged to participate:

1. Veterans who have a disability or disabilities;
2. Have been discharged from the Armed Forces of the United States under honorable conditions; and
3. Possess a valid DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD214), or any other official document(s) issued by the branch of service.

Ruben Anthony Rios Creative Arts & Design Scholarship Program

Former Commissioner Ruben Anthony Rios was a disabled artist and a life-long advocate for the disabled community. He was a member of the Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists and his colorful art has been prominently displayed in the halls of the Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center. He was also an official ambassador of the Reeve Foundation.

Students who meet the following criteria are encouraged to participate:

1. Students reside in the County of Los Angeles;
2. Students diagnosed with a learning or physical disability;
3. Students with a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or better; and
4. Provide the Commission with two pictures of two artistic creations to show their creativity.